



Rural Advocate *Summer 2005*

Arkansas Rural Development Commission

Sam E. Angel II
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Lake Village

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DeQueen

Judy Brown
Brinkley

Jeff Gillespie
Danville

Mike Hathorn
Huntsville

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Larry Teague
Nashville

Darla Verkamp
Charleston

Arnell Washington
Dumas

2005 Arkansas Rural Development Conference in Review

We would like to thank everyone who attended the 2005 Arkansas Rural Development Conference May 24-26 at the Hot Springs Convention Center in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The conference was a huge success, and we had an outstanding turnout of over 500 participants, including 70 legislators. Everyone came together to learn about issues affecting rural communities. Throughout the conference, attendees were invited to meet with other involved Arkansans, attend panel discussions, and view exhibits.

Guest speakers included Secretary of State Charlie Daniels, Public Service Commissioner Daryl Bassett, and keynote speaker Deena Burnett. Ms. Burnett's husband, Tom Burnett, was a hero of Flight 93 on September 11th. She spoke about her experi-

ences following the tragic event and how Tom's life has inspired her family to make positive differences in her community.

Several guests attended the panel discussion about the methamphetamine epidemic in rural Arkansas. For the last several years, Arkansas has ranked third in the nation per capita in terms of the number of methamphetamine laboratories seized. Only California and Missouri have ranked higher, and they both have substantially greater populations. Former Undersecretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Asa Hutchinson, U.S. Attorney Robert C. Balfe, and Benton County Drug Court Judge Jay Finch were among the speakers for this panel. They discussed ideas and solutions to combat this epidemic level problem in rural Arkansas.

The Political Roundtable session invited Arkansas state legislators to discuss hot topics such as education, highways, government streamlining/tax cuts, and gambling. In the discussion Looking Back at the 85th General Assembly, legislators focused on issues that faced the last session. These discussions provided an excellent opportunity for citizens to ask questions and comment on issues affecting our state.

Of course the rural Development Conference would not be complete without karaoke night! Karaoke was a huge hit with singing and dancing all evening.

While this year's conference was a great success, next year's conference in Eureka Springs promises to be even better. We hope to see you there!

Cycle II Calendar:

Grants Available

Rural Community Grant Programs

Rural Block Grant Program

Deadline for Application Submission

Friday, December 16, 2005 by 4:30 p.m. (postmarked)

Application Review Period

January, 2006

Grant Awards Announcements (tentative)

February, 2006



Thank you very much to all who attended the Arkansas Rural Development Conference in Hot Springs this year. Your attendance helps ensure the success and continuation of the many programs our agency provides. We hope that everyone had a wonderful time and enjoyed networking and promoting the success of Arkansas' rural areas. We look forward to seeing you at next year's conference in beautiful Eureka Springs!

Bruce Campbell, DRS Director



Sam E. Angel II, ARDC Chair



Funding Sources for Arkansas Firefighters

*Special thanks to Robert Summerville from the Arkansas Forestry Commission!

(State of Arkansas), The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM)

- \$8,800,000.00 Act 833 or Insurance Turnback funds Code 14-284-403 to assist with trucks, fire equipment, etc.
- Contact Tim Gehring at (501) 730-9750 or tim.gehring@arkansas.gov

(State/Federal), Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)

- \$300,000.00 – \$350,000.00 for water handling equipment, tankers, dry hydrants, radios, and training.
- Contact Charles Gangluff at (501) 868-8483 or aarcd@ipa.net

(State of Arkansas), Arkansas Forestry Commission

- Has a \$910,000 interest-free loan program for the purchase of firefighting vehicles and equipment. Contact Robert Summerville at 501-679-3730 or robert.summerville@arkansas.gov
- Provides Federal Excess equipment and vehicles free of charge to fire departments on a 50 year no cost lease based upon request forms. About 150 vehicles per year are obtained. Contact RFP Coordinator Randy Pogue at 501-679-3581, ext. 232 or randy.pogue@arkansas.gov
- Administers the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service every year. Provides \$1,000 grants to fire departments statewide to purchase fire fighting equipment. Contact Robert Summerville at 501-679-3730 or robert.summerville@arkansas.gov
- Provides 4-hour Wildland Fire Suppression Training Course to firemen statewide. Contact Gary Patton, at 501-679-3581, ext. 223 or ext. 224 or gary.patton@arkansas.gov for scheduling.

(Federal Agency) Office of Domestic Preparedness

- Offers the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant to help volunteer, career, and combination fire departments pay a portion of the salaries of newly hired firefighters. Also funds projects to help nonprofit volunteer and combination fire departments recruit volunteer firefighters.
- Visit their website at www.firegrantsupport.com/safer/ or call 1-866-274-0960 for more information.

(Federal Agency) USDA Community Facilities Grant

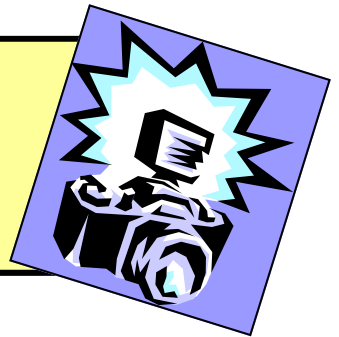
- \$100 - \$100,000.00 (average \$31,037.00) no match grant funds and loans for the construction, expansion, and improvement of community facilities in rural areas to include fire service.
- Call 202-720-1490 or Jerry Virden at (501) 301-3265 or jerry.virden@ar.usda.gov

Other Sources of Assistance for Fire Departments

- Arkansas Fire Training Academy - provides training for fighting fires, contact Mike Brackin, Director at (870) 574-1521 or mbrackin@sautech.edu
- Department of Health - some funding available for certain fire-related items, contact Bettye Watts at (501) 661-2718 or bwatts@healthyarkansas.com
- State Fire Marshall - information and code enforcement, contact Lt. Lindsey Williams at (501) 618-8624 or lindsey.williams@asp.state.ar.us
- State Agency for Federal Excess Property - source of equipment and vehicles, small cost for equipment, contact James H. Smith, Jr. at (501) 835-3111 or jim.smith@arkansas.gov

For additional grant funding resources visit our website at
www.arkansas.gov/drs/

Check out pictures from the 2005
Arkansas Rural Development Conference!



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"Striving to Enhance the Quality of Life in Rural Arkansas"

Rural Advocate of the Year Honored

Congratulations!

The Rural Advocate of the Year award is one of the most prestigious awards in the state and recognizes Arkansans who provide exemplary service to rural areas. This years award recipient was Mayor JoAnne Bush of Lake Village. Mayor Bush was honored at the Arkansas Rural Development Conference held May 24th – 26th in Hot Springs.

Each year the Rural Development Commission selects an honoree, and past recipients of the award include Senators David Pryor and Dale Bumpers, former state legislators James Scott and Phil Jacobs, and two current members of the ARDC, Bruce Leggitt and Larry Teague, who is also a former legislator.

Department of Rural Services Director Bruce Campbell says that Mayor Bush demonstrates exceptional leadership. "Mayor Bush is one of the most



ARDC Chair Sammy Angel (left) and DRS Director Bruce Campbell (right) present Mayor JoAnne Bush of Lake Village with the Rural Advocate of the Year award.

outstanding mayors in Arkansas," said Campbell. Arkansas Rural Development Commission Chair Sam E. Angel agreed, saying,

"Lake Village is fortunate to have a person who works so tirelessly to move the city forward. She has helped make Lake Village's parks and fire departments second to none in rural Arkansas."

Mayor Bush has been appointed by two Governors to sit on the Arkansas Local Police and Fire Retirement System Board and currently serves as the first woman chairperson of LOPFI. Working for Lake Village as a city clerk for 18 years, Mayor Bush has also served on the Executive Committee of the Municipal League for 11 years.

Congratulations Mayor Bush, and thank you for making a difference in rural Arkansas.